



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Patent and Trademark Office**

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SERIAL NUMBER	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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EXAMINER  
RAYMOND C. 3

ART UNIT  
1504

DATE MAILED: 07/08/92

This is a communication from the examiner in charge of your application.  
COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS

☒ This application has been examined ☐ Responsive to communication filed on \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ This action is made final.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), \_\_\_\_\_ days from the date of this letter.  
Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. 35 U.S.C. 133

**Part I THE FOLLOWING ATTACHMENT(S) ARE PART OF THIS ACTION:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited by Examiner, PTO-892.        | 2. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice re Patent Drawing, PTO-948.        |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Art Cited by Applicant, PTO-1449.  | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application, Form PTO-152. |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Information on How to Effect Drawing Changes, PTO-1474. | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> _____  |

**Part II SUMMARY OF ACTION**

1. ☒ Claims 1 - 24 are pending in the application.  
Of the above, claims 1 - 20 are withdrawn from consideration.

2. ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ have been cancelled.

3. ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are allowed.

4. ☒ Claims 21 - 24 are rejected.

5. ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are objected to.

6. ☒ Claims 1 - 24 are subject to restriction or election requirement.

7. ☐ This application has been filed with informal drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.85 which are acceptable for examination purposes.

8. ☐ Formal drawings are required in response to this Office action.

9. ☐ The corrected or substitute drawings have been received on \_\_\_\_\_. Under 37 C.F.R. 1.84 these drawings are ☐ acceptable. ☐ not acceptable (see explanation or Notice re Patent Drawing, PTO-948).

10. ☐ The proposed additional or substitute sheet(s) of drawings, filed on \_\_\_\_\_, has (have) been ☐ approved by the examiner. ☐ disapproved by the examiner (see explanation).

11. ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed on \_\_\_\_\_, has been ☐ approved. ☐ disapproved (see explanation).

12. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of the claim for priority under U.S.C. 119. The certified copy has ☐ been received ☐ not been received  
☐ been filed in parent application, serial no. \_\_\_\_\_; filed on \_\_\_\_\_

13. ☐ Since this application appears to be in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quayle, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

14. ☐ Other

EXAMINER'S ACTION

Art Unit 1504

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. § 121:

I. Claims 1-20, drawn to a heterogeneous braid, classified in Class 57, subclass 243.

II. Claims 21-24, drawn to a surgical suture, classified in Class 600, subclass 231.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are related as mutually exclusive species in intermediate-final product relationship. Distinctness is proven for claims in this relationship if the intermediate product is useful to make other than the final product (M.P.E.P. § 806.04(b), 3rd paragraph), and the species are patentably distinct (M.P.E.P. § 806.04(h)).

In the instant case, the intermediate product is deemed to be useful as a fishing line and the inventions are deemed patentably distinct since there is nothing on this record to show them to be obvious variants. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record

Art Unit 1504

showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions anticipated by the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 of the other invention.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with Matthew S. Goodwin on June 23, 1992 a provisional election was made without traverse to prosecute the invention of Group II, claims 21-24. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in responding to this Office action. Claims 1-20 are withdrawn from further consideration by the Examiner, 37 C.F.R. § 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. § 103 which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Art Unit 1504

Subject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art only under subsection (f) or (g) of section 102 of this title, shall not preclude patentability under this section where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person.

Claims 21-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Burgess (U.K. Patent Application No. 2,218,312A).

Burgess discloses a fishing line of braided construction comprising filaments of polyethylene and filaments of polyester or nylon. Such a braid is disclosed to have the low stretchability of polyethylene and the low coefficient of friction of polyester. (See page 1). It is therefore known to braid filaments of two dissimilar polymers together to form a structure which embodies the desirable properties of each fiber.

Braided sutures are well known in the art. Many of the requirements of sutures are comparable to those of fishing line—strength, low stretchability, flexibility, low coefficient of friction etc. Indeed, many of the same materials are used for both of these applications. It would therefore have been


Art Unit 1504


obvious, in view of Burgess, to use a heterogeneous braid for a suture. Claims 21 and 23 are therefore unpatentable over Burgess.

Synthetic, fiber forming polymers are widely employed as filaments in braided sutures. In German Patent Application DE 2949920A1, for example, surgical sutures made from braided polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) fibers or polyester fibers are disclosed. As polyester fibers are noted for their strength and PTFE fibers for their low coefficient of friction, it would have been obvious to use a braid comprising both types of filaments as a suture.

It is also known in the art to a braid around longitudinally extending core filaments. Ohi et al, for example, disclosure a core comprising a plurality of synthetic fiber filaments (column 1, lines 57-60). Polyester filament are specifically disclosed (column 2, lines 4-9). It would therefore have been obvious to dispose a heterogeneous braid comprising polyester and polytetrafluoroethylene fibers around a core of polyester fibers to form a suture. Claims 22 and 24 are therefore unpatentable over Burgess.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Chris Raimund at telephone number (703) 308-3452.

  
Chris Raimund:jp  
July 06, 1992

  
GEORGE F. LESMES  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
GROUP 150